

Bird Calls

Newsletter of the Evanston North Shore Bird Club

April 2010 www.ensbc.org



Shrike by Nancy Halliday

STAYING SAFE *By Eleonora di Liscia*

With migration nigh upon us, many birders will wander into secluded areas. Reports of stray cougars aside, the biggest threat in the Evanston area may be other people. What can you do to stay safe?

"Obviously if you're watching something, one should always be cognizant of your surroundings and not so engrossed that you wouldn't notice someone," said Commander Tom Guenther of the Evanston Police Department.

Most calls on Harbert and James Parks are not of a serious or dangerous nature, and the reports from Perkins Woods usually concern teenagers, said Guenther. But he urges birders to report anything odd, and police will be happy to check it out. "If you get the feeling you are uncomfortable in a situation, listen to those feelings. Don't let your hobby overwhelm your safety," he said.

Other safety tips include keeping your cell phone handy and preprogrammed to 911, so that you only have to hit one number instead of three. Wear a whistle in case someone advances on you. You may be able to draw attention to yourself and scare them off.

Don't bring anything that would make you attractive to robbers, such as large jewelry or a big purse. Commander Guenther does not believe binoculars or fancy cameras offer much temptation.

"Armed robbers usually tend not to go after such items as binoculars,

but rather they are interested in cash, jewelry or electronic items. The average person doesn't know the difference between a \$500 camera and a \$90 one," he said.

Keep people you reside with informed of your whereabouts or leave a note. For example, tell a roommate: "I'm going to Skokie Lagoons at 8 a.m. and then to Perkins Woods. I should be back by noon."

"That way, if you aren't back, they know something is wrong," said Guenther.

Be aware of your location. Then if you need help, you can accurately report where you are. For example, "I am 500 feet down the path from parking lot A," rather than "I am in Harms Woods."

If possible, bird secluded areas with other people. Avoid wearing headphones that prevent you from hearing what's going on around you.

"If you put into practice all of these things, it doesn't negate anything happening, but it lessens the chances," said Commander Guenther.

Guenther does empathize. After all, he's a scuba diver.

"We are engrossed in our sport. But we have to look out for our scuba buddy and some of the hazards underneath the sea. You can get stung or bitten. The same things that are applicable under the water are applicable while you bird. The basic lesson is be aware of your surroundings," he said.

HIGH ON (AND IN) ECUADOR *By Debby Storms*

On January 18, Libby Hill, Jane Koten, Carol Cleave, Nancy Griffin and I took off for our second trip to the charming, bird-rich country of Ecuador. Though small, it ranks fourth in the world for bird diversity (more than 1,800 species of birds like to call it home). While in 2009, we hunted for Amazonian rainforest specialties on the Napo River, this year we searched for montane species on the western and eastern slopes of the Andes.

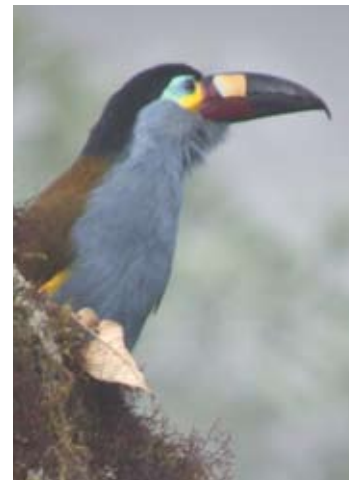


Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan
Photo by Libby Hill

After a quick night in Quito, we hit the road early, in order to have plenty of time to make birding stops as we headed north and west. Winding our way along rough (though beautiful) mountain roads, we hit elevations ranging from 5,700 to 11,500 feet within the Yanacocha Reserve and along the Old Nono-Mindo

Road. These areas of dry temperate, wet temperate and elfin forest are famous to birders for the mixed flocks of tanagers and other birds that can fly in at any moment. Thanks to our excellent guide, José Illanes of Tropical

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NEWS OF THE FLOCK

With sadness we share the news that long-time member, Mary Cannon, was killed when a commuter train hit a car she was riding in during the heavy snowstorm in early February. The Club sends condolences to Mary's family and birding friends. She will be missed.

HIGH ON (AND IN) ECUADOR CONTINUED FROM COVER

Birding, our jet-lagged, bleary-eyed group managed to focus on 41 species, such as the Sickie-winged Guan, Lyre-tailed Nightjar, Collared Trogon, Crimson-rumped Toucanet, Slate-throated Whitestart, Hooded Mountain-Tanager, and – earning our “most tongue-twisterous bird name of the day” award – the Superciliaried Hemispingus.



Chocó Trogon - Photo by José Illanes

We arrived that evening at birder-friendly Tandayapa Lodge, our base for the next three days. From there we birded Tandayapa Valley and Mindo Reserve, areas of beautiful cloud forest and hot spots for Chocó endemics such as the Chocó Trogon and Sword-billed Hummingbird. The lodge is famous for attracting hummingbirds, and rightly so. In the space of an hour, we logged 17 species, from the teeny, bee-like Purple-throated Woodstar, to the incredibly flashy Violet-tailed Sylph (its tail is at least twice as long as its body, and shimmers with tones of violet and peacock blue).

A unique and special experience was a morning spent at Refugio Paz, also known as “the Antpitta Farm.” Entrepreneurial farmer Angel Paz has an eco-business on the side in which he and members of his family help birders catch glimpses of the

Giant, Moustached and Yellow-breasted Antpittas that breed on his property. Sr. Paz lures forth these notoriously shy and elusive birds with tasty worms and first-name-basis cajoling, calling “¡Venga, Willie; venga, cariño!” (“Come, Willie, come on, darling!”)

From Tandayapa, we drove east for our final two nights at Guango Lodge. From there, we birded Papallacta Pass, home of the Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe, a target bird, and an area of very high elevations – at our highest, we reached 14,000 feet. We had been warned that the weather could be cruel up there. However, we were incredibly lucky to arrive on a rare day of sun and relative warmth. Though it was definitely nosebleed territory, we were well-compensated with breathtaking, 360-degree views of Andean mountain peaks and up-close-and-personal looks at the Seedsnipe, who didn’t seem to mind the lack of oxygen one bit.

On our final birding day, we visited Antisana Reserve. With its vast, open stretches of páramo grassland and elfin forest and staggering views of the snow-topped Antisana and Cotopaxi volcanoes, it possesses an eerie beauty hard to forget. When we were able to take our eyes away from the scenery, we were further rewarded with excellent looks at specialties such as the Black-faced Ibis, Andean Lapwing, Páramo Pipit, Andean Gull, Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, and – last but certainly not least – the legendary Andean Condor.

Our total trip count was 233 species seen and 6 heard, including 35 species of tanagers and 37 hummers. Given that we only had six birding days, and considering that an astonishing 80 percent of the species were lifers for all of us, we left very satisfied and eager for a third birding experience in this diverse and rewarding country.

UPCOMING ENSBC BOARD ELECTION

The following members have been nominated to serve on the ENSBC Board. This slate will be voted on at the April 27, 2010 program night. Anyone wishing to have their name submitted for a position, please contact Joel Greenberg at **630-725-9416**.

President: Tim Wallace

Vice President: Gary Hantsbarger

Membership: Libby Hill

Treasurer: John Hockman

Bird Calls Editor: Eleonora di Liscia

Corresponding Secretary: Anne Tanner

Recording Secretary: Nancy Halliday

Program Chair: Brian Herriot

Field Trip Chair: Jeanette Jaskula

Assistant Field Chair: Sulli Gibson

Archivist: Jennifer Schmidt

Ways and Means: Paul Kallman

Publicity: Phyllis Reynolds

Conservation Chair:

Lloyd Davidson

CONSERVATION COLUMN

by Suzanne Checchia

Give Back to Birds - Field Trip and Workday: The Bird Conservation Network is sponsoring its spring Give Back to the Birds – Field Trip/Workday on April 24 at Bartel Grassland, an Illinois Important Bird Area. Last year, 15 species of shorebirds, including Wilson’s phalarope, were sighted at this time of year, as well as Lapland longspurs, and a whooping crane. Come lend a hand planting sedges in a new wetland area!

For more information and to RSVP, contact Joan Bruchman at **847-687-3108** or pjbruchman@yahoo.com.

IT’S MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME!

Memberships expire at the end of April. Your membership assures ongoing support for the Club’s programs, field trips and Christmas counts. Members receive six issues of Bird Calls, an annual member directory and the free use of our video and book library.

Whether you receive Bird Calls by E-mail or USPS, you will receive a renewal notice by snail mail. Please complete and mail the form in the envelope provided. To enhance your support of the Club, please consider a life membership.

Thank you in advance for returning your renewal in a timely manner. We appreciate your continued support of the Club.

A Birding Life

JEFF SANDERS

By Eleonora di Liscia

It was July, 1962, and Nettie Sanders was desperate to get her 14-year old son, Jeff, out of the dark basement where he had been playing a baseball game using dice and a spinner. So she marched into the Chicago Marshall Field's book department and asked the shop lady for a bird guide (Peterson's) and a place to get information about birds (ENSBC).

Jeff never asked his mother what made her think of birding, but the teenager immediately visited the Arboretum and chalked up one Indigo Bunting and one Flicker. A life long love affair had begun.

Jeff later realized that his birding might have begun at an even younger age. He found a childhood set of bird guides: the red book, yellow book, green book and blue books.

"They were so ancient. They're not on E-bay. They're not on Amazon. I found them later. The first bird note that I ever made was when I was eight. It said, "Robin, March 8, 1956." So therefore, it's number one on my life list," said Jeff.

For his 15th birthday, Jeff demanded a set of real binoculars to replace the child's opera glasses he had been using. His first ENSBC outing in August, 1963 was somewhere near the present day Golf Mill.

"There were hundred and hundreds of shore birds, because at that time, everything west of Golf Mill was still farmland," he said.

In those days, ENSBC had a Hospitality Chair, who made sure everyone had rides to meetings and field trips, since not everyone then owned a car. This enabled young Jeff to go on the trips.

"The more I got into it, the more I could identify birds, the more fun it became. I guess if I was bad at it, I probably wouldn't have pursued it," Jeff said.

Jeff based his college choice on where he could see new birds. He started in Forestry and Wildlife in Colorado. "My parents wanted me to go to Michigan State, and I said, 'I'm not going to see any new birds there.'"

Eventually, the forestry major proved to be less fun than Jeff

had hoped, so he switched to Northern Illinois and majored in history, graduating with a B.S. in Education. Jeff substitute taught for three years before taking the Civil Service Exam. The second job offered him was with the Railroad Retirement Board, where he works today. Jeff accepted the job, "because I thought they were going to give me a free railroad pass, so I could bird all over the country, but they didn't give that to me."

In August, 1978, Jeff married Babette, who at times accompanied him to bird for ducks or shorebirds. Jeff still managed three yearly

week-long birding trips around the country until having children

"When we went on vacation, from dawn to noon is birding, and from noon to dinner is whatever she wants," said Sanders. "When we had kids, then it was separate vacations, because we didn't want to take little kids on those types of trips, so we would each take a week separately."

Jeff has been an active member in ENSBC. His November Lakefront trip is the longest on-going field trip in the Chicago area, running since 1970. In honor

of recently deceased member Ralph Herbst, Jeff led Ralph's specialty Loads of Ducks Field Trip to the Palos area on March 20, 2010.

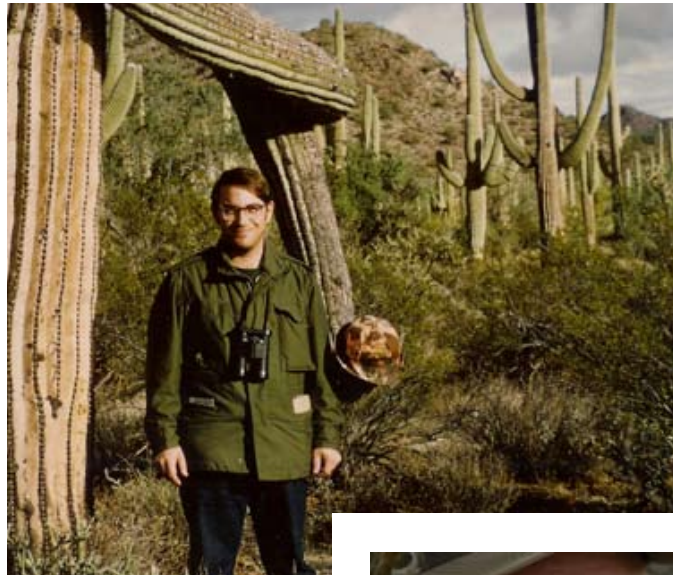
Jeff served a variety of positions on the Board from 1970 to 1988 and again from 1992 to 2009. These positions

included Field Trip and Assistant Field Trip Chair, President, Vice President, and Conservation Chair.

Jeff contributed to the 1982 and 1998 and upcoming editions of the Chicago area birding checklist.

After all these years, Jeff still birds as often as possible.

"I want to see as many birds as I can. There are some days I go chase a single bird, but I want to see quantity. Quality is great too. If I see 50 White-crowned Sparrows, that's a great day, because I don't see that every day," he said.



Young Jeff at Saguaro National Monument in 1975 by Jeff Sanders.

In 2009 at Illinois Beach State Park Hawkwatch by Janice Sweet



FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, April 17, 2010, 8:00AM — North Glenview

A tour through the better birding areas that North Glenview has to offer by local birder, Sulli Gibson. We will most likely bird Techny Basin Conservation Area, Lake Glenview, and The Air Station Prairie for early migrants and lingering waterfowl. Techny Basin is located west of Waukegan Rd., south of Willow Rd., and east of Ravine Way in Glenview. Meet at the gravel parking lot on Ravine Way. The trip will last approximately 3.5 hours but you are welcome to leave at any time. Leader: Sulli Gibson, sulli.gibson@comcast.net.

Sunday, April 25, 2010, 7:30AM**Jackson Park and Lakefront – Wooded Isle**

A perennial favorite among club members, this trip is excellent for early migrants. Park south of the Museum of Science and Industry after driving on the east side of the building. Leader: Dick Young, rfyoung2@juno.com.

**Saturday, May 1, 8, 15, and 22, 2010, 8:30AM
Northwestern Lakefill and Sailing Beach**

This area has long been a stopover for migrants of all kinds headed north. Park on the lakeside of the upper deck of the south parking lot off of Sheridan Rd. and Clark St., north of Clark St. beach. Leaders: Sue Robert and Libby Hill, libbyhill@comcast.net, and other TBD.

**Saturday and Sunday, May 1 and 2, 2010, 10:00AM – 12:00NOON
Perkins Woods Garlic Mustard Pull**

Help rid the woods of this aggressive non-native weed. Perform a good deed, be among friends, and enjoy birds and wildflowers. Come for an hour or a morning, 10 a.m. to 12 noon each day. Perkins Woods is at Colfax and Ewing between Canal St. and Golf Rd. in Evanston. Leader: Libby Hill, libbyhill@comcast.net.

Friday, May 7, 14, and 21, 2010, 8:00AM — Skokie Lagoons

These Friday trips pack a great list of warbler species during spring migration. Meet at the Forest Preserve parking lot north of Willow Rd. just east of the Edens Expressway. Leaders: May 7 and 14: Lynne Carpenter, May 21: Eleonora di Liscia and Ray Pershing.

**Tuesdays, May 11, 18, and 25, 2010, 5:30 PM
“The Evanston Express (and Skokie Swift)”**

A series of trips for when you don't have much time and can't go far from home. Each trip starts at a different location and the leader may decide to go to more than one park. May 11: Perkins Woods: Perkins is located at the corner of Grant and Ewing. Park on the street and meet at the southwest corner. May 18: Harbert Park: The parking lot is east of the North Shore Channel on McDaniel off of Main. May 25: Emily Oaks Nature Center (Skokie): Meet in the parking lot. Turn north on Knox (east of Skokie Blvd.) and make a left at the T intersection to the Emily Oaks parking lot. Leader: Eleonora di Liscia diliscialaw@comcast.net.

**May 12, 2010 - Wednesday
Foley Pond.**

Tucked between the 1st and 2nd holes of the Sunset Valley Gold Course, Foley Pond is encircled by a woodland path and is a good stop for migrants. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at approximately 1268 McDaniels Ave. in Highland Park. From Green Bay Rd., turn left on Bob-o-link Rd. and then left on McDaniels. A sign for Foley Pond is about 100 feet on the right. Park on the street. Trip will last about an hour. Leader: Donnie Dann.

**Sunday, May 16, 2010, 8:00AM
Gillson Park**

The Illinois shoreline juts furthest into the lake at this Wilmette park making it an excellent spot to observe migrant passerines in the tall trees and wildflowers and shorebirds on the beach. This trip is cosponsored by ENSBC and Go Green Wilmette. Meet at the top of the Wallace Bowl near the Lakeview Center. Leaders: Sue Robert, Libby Hill, libbyhill@comcast.net, and Harry Drucker.

**Monday, May 17, 2010, 5:00AM
Montrose Point**

Reservations with the leader required. Meet at 5:00 a.m. at the Magic Hedge entrance sign along Montrose Harbor Dr. From Lakeshore Dr. take Montrose Ave. east to Montrose Harbor Dr. Turn right (east) and park along the bend in the road. Leader: David B. Johnson, djohnsoda@comcast.net, 847-459-3989.

**May 19, 2010 - Wednesday
Wednesdays at Ryerson Conservation Area**

Ryerson Conservation Area. Join these early morning trips to help start your work day. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Ryerson in front of Brushwood (the old visitor's center) off Riverwoods Rd. between Rte. 22 and Deerfield Rd. As you drive in off Riverwoods Rd., make the first left at the white wooden gates. Leader: Nan Buckhardt.

**Sunday, May 23, 2010, 7:00AM
Jackson Park and Lakefront – Wooded Isle**

Look for migrating passerines at this park. Park south of the Museum of Science and Industry after driving on the east side of the building. Leader: Brian Herriott, wrybill@sbcglobal.net.

**Saturday, May 29, 2010, 8:00AM
“The Other Side of the Road” at Volo Bog**

Bird the less-traveled trails west of Brandenburg Rd. at this beautiful state natural area. Last year the group tallied nearly 70 species. Expect about a 2.5 mile hike (about 3 hours) through old fields, woodlands, prairie, and bogs. Target birds include flycatchers, bluebirds, and late migrants. Meet at the parking lot at the Visitor Center on Brandenburg Rd., west of Rt. 12. Bring along water and bug repellent. After the hike participants can visit the Visitor Center and bird additional trails. Leader: Margo Milde, mrm1206@yahoo.com.

**Sunday, May 30, 2010, 8:00AM
The Grove, Glenview**

Expect later warblers and other passerines. Meet at The Grove: east side of Milwaukee Ave., just south of Lake Ave., in the second parking lot that leads to the Interpretive Center. Leader: Ari Rice.

PROGRAM NIGHTS

All programs are held at the Evanston Ecology Center, 2024 McCormick Blvd, Evanston

Tuesday, April 27 at 7:30 PM

“The Nature of Birding.” In a unique program, we have assembled a panel of local birders, each representing a different approach to this captivating activity. Panel members will discuss many topics including the allures of birding, tactics for finding birds, and how birding has changed over the years. Hosted by Joel Greenberg, the panel will be comprised of Walter Marcisz, Sebastian Patti, and one more person TBA. Audience participation is encouraged, so come prepared for a lively discussion on everyone's favorite obsession.